

13 May 1986

## Talking Points for ADDI Appearance Before HPSCI

South Korea

President Chun Doo Hwan has continued to pursue a softer line toward the opposition and their demands for constitutional reform since his return from his West European trip last month. [redacted] European criticism of Chun made an impression, although his more conciliatory policy continues a pattern begun earlier this spring.

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- For the first time, Chun has offered to discuss amendments to the constitution before he leaves office. His price is agreement by the main opposition party (New Korea Democratic Party) to halt its petition drive for direct presidential elections and to handle constitutional issues in the legislature.
- Chun has also offered to meet alone with NKDP President Lee Min Woo and suggested the ruling party president talk with opposition leader Kim Young Sam.

Opposition party leaders see Chun's move as largely a maneuver, given his control over the National Assembly, but it has temporarily put them on the defensive.

- Even the normally antigovernment press has encouraged the opposition to accept the proposal.
- Moderates in the party also hope they can use the opportunity to shift from confrontational tactics to a more constructive, and less politically dangerous, debate with the government.
- Dissident leader Kim Dae Jung, however, dismisses the idea and opposes the offer as a ploy to divide the opposition.

The radicals are also causing trouble for the opposition.

- A planned rally on 3 May at Inchon was derailed when several thousand radical students and workers clashed with police.
- The rally on 10 May (Saturday) at Masan included some violence, but the police continued to show general restraint.

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Violence may grow in the next several weeks because of pressure from a more vigorous radical student and dissident movement and the political opposition's apparent problems in keeping it in line.

- The government is already worried that the late May period will be tense, as dissidents commemorate the anti-Chun riots in Kwangju City in 1980.
- The self-immolation of two students on campus two weeks ago may encourage more radical protests, and students may echo remarks by opposition leaders Kim Dae Jung and Kim Young Sam, who both criticized US statements last week of support for Chun.